



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

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Signature _____

PETITIONS

Federal Form of Petition in Canada

About Petitions and how they work

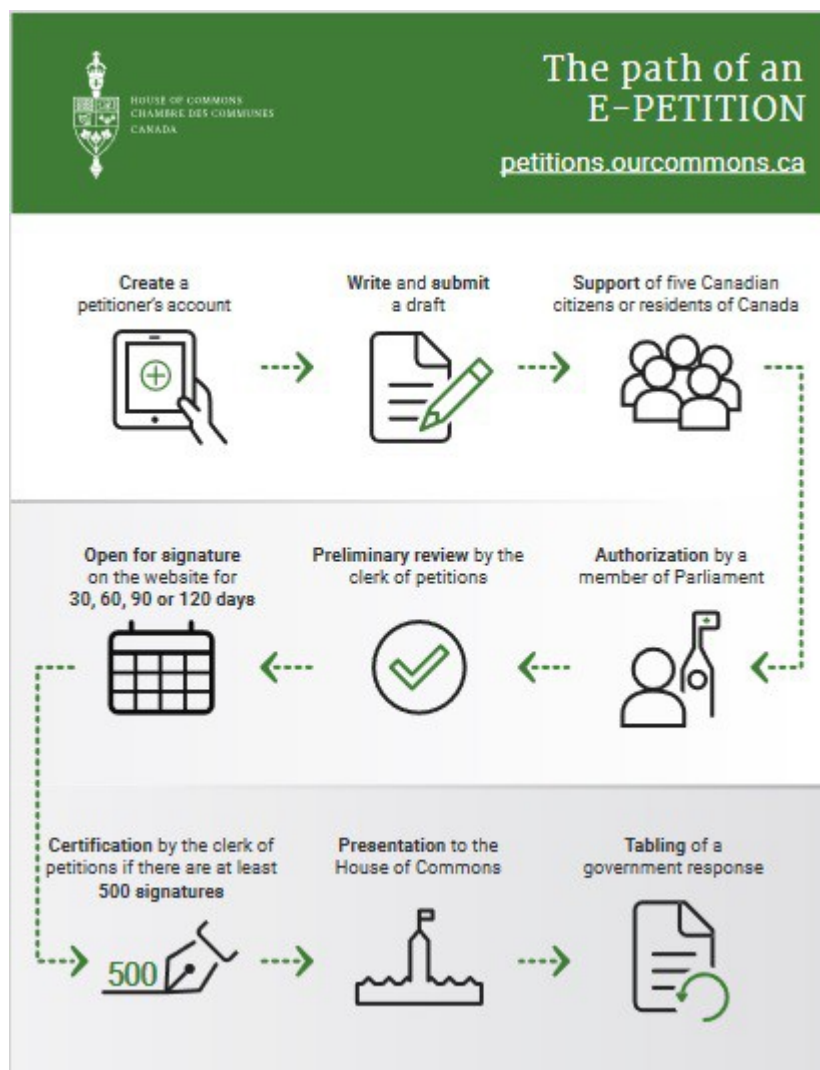
This section provides reference documents, such as practical guides for the public, which include the different terms of use and other conditions for both e-petitions and paper petitions. Should you require additional information, please contact the Clerk of Petitions at PMB-AED@parl.gc.ca.

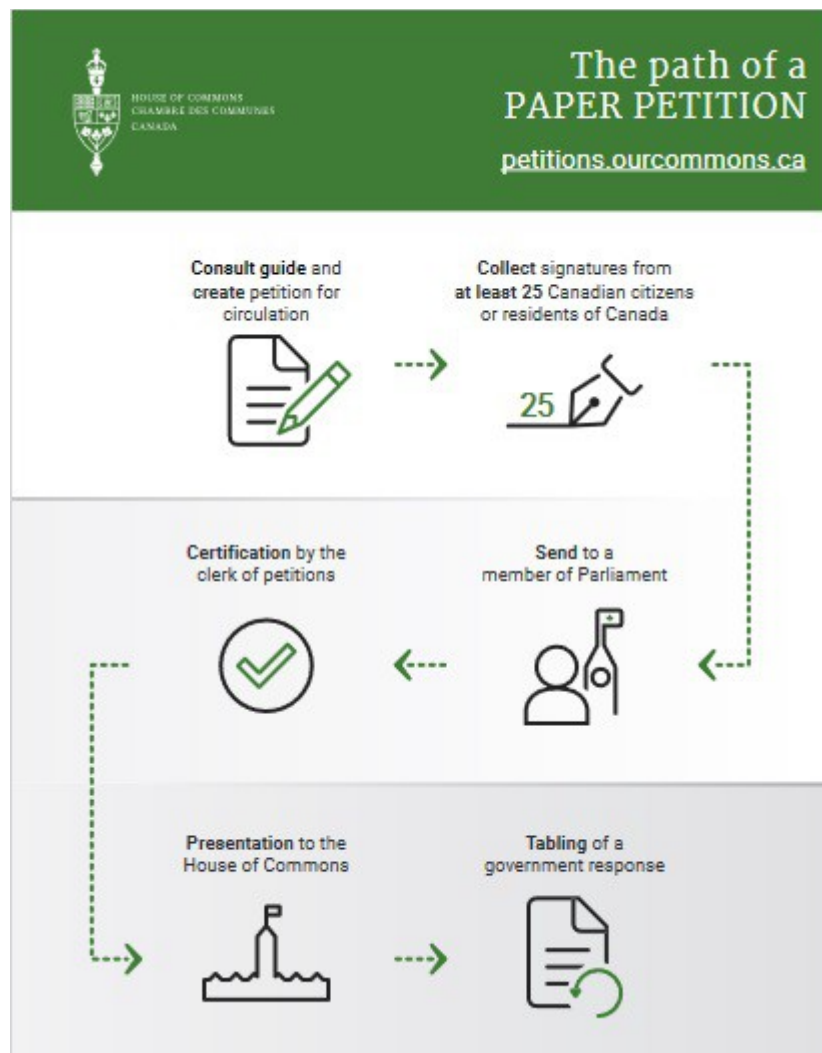
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Electronic Petitions – Guide and Terms of Use

What is an E-petition?

An **electronic petition** ("e-petition") is used to draw attention to an issue of public interest or concern and to request that the House of Commons, the Government of Canada, a Minister of the Crown, or a Member of the House of Commons take or refrain from some action. A person preparing and submitting such a request is known as a **petitioner**.

E-petitions must meet certain requirements established by the rules and practices of the House. The Clerk of Petitions, a non-partisan House of Commons employee, holds the authority to certify that these requirements have been met.

Petitioners cannot directly present a petition to the House of Commons; only a Member of Parliament (MP) is able to do so. To have a petition posted on the House of Commons petitions website and eventually presented to the House, it must be authorized for online publication by an MP.

Signing an E-petition

You can search for a petition that is of interest to you by going to the petitions website and searching by

keyword, subject, petition number (in the format "e-123") or by the name of the MP who has agreed to authorize its online publication.

To be a signatory:

- you must be a citizen or resident of Canada (no age minimum);
- you may not use an email address or a device with an IP address associated with the Government of Canada or the Parliament of Canada;
- you must provide certain information so that your identity may be validated by the House of Commons;
- you must accept the [Terms of Use](#).

The information that you will need to provide as a signatory is:

- your name;
- valid email address (note: an email address may only be associated with one signatory);
- if living in Canada, province or territory, and postal code;
- if not living in Canada, country you are currently residing in; and
- telephone number.

After providing this information, you will **receive an automated email prompting you to confirm your signature**. This confirmation must be provided for your signature to be counted. **You may only sign a given e-petition once**. The Clerk of Petitions has the right to reject any signature of which the validity is in doubt.

Creating and Submitting an E-petition

Creating an Account

The first step towards creating an e-petition is to create an account on the petitions website. You may not use an email address or a device with an IP address associated with the Government of Canada or the Parliament of Canada.

A petitioner must provide certain basic contact information and confirm Canadian citizenship or residency, as well as agree to the [Terms of Use](#), as specified later in this document. The information an e-petitioner needs to provide is the following:

- full name;
- city;
- country;
- province or territory, and postal code (if currently residing in Canada);
- telephone number; and
- valid email address.

Once your contact information has been submitted, a message with an embedded hyperlink will automatically be sent to your email address, prompting you to confirm the creation of your account.

Creating a Petition – Format and Content

Note: A petitioner may only have one e-petition open for signature in his or her name at any one time.

A [standardized template](#) exists to assist you in your drafting and to ensure that the following guidelines for the text of a petition are respected:

Addressee

The petition must be addressed to one of the following:

- "the House of Commons" or "the House of Commons in Parliament assembled";
- "the Government of Canada";
- a Minister of the Crown; or
- a Member of the House of Commons.

Text

The text of a petition is essentially a request, also called a "prayer", that the addressee take or avoid some concrete action to remedy a grievance. It must be clear and direct, phrased as a request, and not a demand, and no longer than 250 words.

The petition may also include a more detailed description of the grievance or a statement of opinion, but these alone cannot be received as a petition. URLs or any other link or web-based reference are not permitted.

Language

A petition must be respectful, use temperate language, and not contain improper or unparliamentary language. It should not contain disrespectful or offensive language with respect to the Crown, Parliament, or the courts. It may not include charges made against the character or conduct of Parliament, the courts, or any other duly-constituted authority. The e-petition must be written in either English or French.

Subject of the Petition

Federal jurisdiction

The petition must concern a subject that is within the authority of the Parliament of Canada, the House of Commons, or the Government of Canada. A petition must not concern a purely provincial or municipal matter.

Sub judice

The petition may not concern a matter that is *sub judice*, i.e., a matter that is the subject of legal proceedings or currently before the courts.

Similar petitions

Two e-petitions that are substantially the same may not be open for signature at the same time. An e-petitioner whose e-petition is substantially the same as another may wait for the first e-petition to close or may amend his or her e-petition to make it distinctive. A search function is available on the website to identify existing e-petitions.

Steps to Have an E-petition Published

Before you begin collecting signatures from the general public, the steps listed below must be completed. You will receive an email advising you when the petition progresses through each step.

1. Identify supporters:

- When you draft your petition, you will be prompted to identify at least five potential supporters (Canadian residents or citizens), but no more than ten, and provide their email addresses. **You may not identify yourself as a supporter since you are the petitioner.**
- Supporters must provide certain basic contact information and must also accept the [Terms of Use](#). An email address associated with the Government of Canada or the Parliament of Canada may not be provided as contact information for supporters.
- The first five supporters to back your petition will be automatically added as **signatories** to the petition when it is posted for signature online. They will also receive email updates concerning the petition's progress.

2. Choose the length of time for which your e-petition will remain open for signature (30, 60, 90 or 120 days). **This may not be modified after you submit your e-petition.**

3. Invite any Member of Parliament to authorize the online publication of the e-petition:

- Once five individuals agree to support your petition, it is sent to the Member, who will have 30 days to make a decision. If they have not responded within 30 days or refuse the request, you will be prompted to invite another MP to carry out this role. You will have a total of five such opportunities, if necessary;
- The MP whom you identify to authorize the online publication of the e-petition will be provided with your contact information and may contact you by email or by telephone before responding to your request. **In accepting to authorize its online publication, a Member is not necessarily agreeing with the opinions or request set out in the e-petition;**
- In the event the MP you identified ceases to be a Member before an e-petition is published on the website, the Clerk of Petitions will contact you and invite you to select another Member.

4. Examination by Clerk of Petitions:

- Once an MP has agreed to authorize the online publication of your e-petition, it will be examined by the Clerk of Petitions to ensure that its form and content respect the rules and practices of the House. This includes validating your signature and those of the

supporters.

- If the petition meets the requirements, it will be translated and published on the petitions website for signature by the general public. This step will be done on a first-come, first-served basis, usually within three to five working days from the receipt of the Member's authorization. An email is sent to the petitioner to inform them when their petition is published on the website.
- If the text does not meet the set requirements, the Clerk of Petitions will contact the petitioner via email, explaining the grounds for rejection. A copy of this email will also be sent to the five supporters and to the MP who authorized the online publication of the e-petition. The petitioner may then decide to amend the text of his or her petition, but the submission process must start anew.

Certification and Presentation of a Petition

Once the deadline for signing a petition has closed (i.e., after 30, 60, 90 or 120 days), the Clerk of Petitions will proceed with a final validation of signatures. If there are at least 500 valid signatures, the Clerk of Petitions will issue a certificate to the MP who authorized the online publication of the petition. It can then be presented to the House by any MP. A record of this presentation will appear in the [Journals](#) for that day and the petitioner, supporters and signatories of the petition will be advised by email after its presentation.

If an e-petition has not garnered the minimum number of signatures by the closing date, it will proceed no further, but will remain visible online.

Government Responses to Petitions

The Standing Orders (the rules governing the House of Commons) require the government to respond within 45 calendar days to every petition presented to the House of Commons.

The petitioner, supporters, signatories, and the MP who authorized the online publication of the e-petition will be notified by email when the response is tabled in the House. A copy will also be found on the petitions website along with the original petition.

Prorogation and Dissolution

At **prorogation** (the period of time between two sessions of a Parliament), the petitions website remains active and petitioners may continue to submit petitions and gather signatures. However, certified petitions may not be presented to the House until the opening of the new session. Any outstanding government responses to petitions presented in the previous session must be tabled in the new session.

The **dissolution** of Parliament (the end of a Parliament triggering a general election) terminates the e-petitioning process. The petitions website closes at dissolution and all e-petitions not yet presented to the House are withdrawn, and the obligation for the government to respond to those petitions also lapses. All petitioners will receive an email informing them of the status of their petition. Should a petitioner wish to pursue an issue in the form of an e-petition in the next Parliament, they must start the [process](#) anew approximately three weeks after the general election, when the petitions website reopens.

Any signatures gathered prior to dissolution may not be reused; signatories who wish to support a similar petition in the new Parliament will have to sign again.

Terms of Use

The MP authorizing the online publication of an e-petition is not necessarily supporting its content. No one shall promote an e-petition by using the Member's name without his or her written consent.

During the e-petition process, the collecting of personal information by the House of Commons on this website is kept to the strict minimum in order to ensure the integrity of the process. Personal information provided by a petitioner, supporter and signatory must be accurate and up-to-date. The use and provision of false information is prohibited.

The House of Commons reserves the right to close an account, or to remove an e-petition or a signature from an e-petition at any time if it determines that the integrity of the e-petition process has been compromised or that these Terms of Use have been breached.

In creating an account or submitting an e-petition, the petitioner must accept the following:

- An e-petition must be created and submitted in good faith and must not include, among other things:
 - false names or any information you know to be false;
 - potentially libelous or defamatory statements;
 - information protected by a court order (e.g., the identities of children in custody disputes);
 - matters that are the subject of legal proceedings;
 - impertinent or improper matters; or
 - disrespectful or offensive language with respect to the Crown, Parliament or the courts.
- The petitioner is solely responsible for the content of the e-petition.
- It is the petitioner's responsibility to inform potential supporters that some of their personal information will be inputted in the e-petition system and used to contact them when an e-petition is submitted by the petitioner.
- Any draft e-petition saved on this website, including information relating to supporters, may be consulted by the House of Commons' authorized personnel at any time.

A breach of these Terms of Use may amount to contempt of the House of Commons.

Privacy of Personal Information

The House of Commons is committed to follow best practices related to the protection of personal information collected, used, disclosed, transmitted and preserved as part of the e-petition process.

The personal information provided on this website will be subject to the following:

- The House of Commons' authorized personnel will have access to the personal information of a petitioner, supporter and signatory, and may use it to contact them or to validate their identity to ensure the integrity of the e-petition process. Data may be used for statistical purposes.
- The petitioner and supporters of an e-petition will be provided with automatic email updates on the various stages of the said e-petition, while signatories will be asked if they wish to subscribe to those emails, for each petition signed.

In creating an account and submitting an e-petition:

- The MP authorizing its online publication will have access to the petitioner's personal information until that MP declines the e-petition.
- Upon publishing an e-petition on this website, the complete name, city, province or territory, and country of the petitioner will be permanently published along with the text of each e-petition on the website.
- The petitioner's other personal information will be safeguarded on the House of Commons' servers. An account may be deleted by the petitioner, provided that the petitioner does not have an active e-petition. In deleting an account, the personal information collected for the creation of the account will also be deleted, except for that information permanently published with a petition.

In **supporting or signing** an e-petition:

- None of the personal information provided to the House of Commons by a supporter or a signatory will be published on this website.
- The signature of the supporter or the signatory will be added to the total number of signatures garnered by the e-petition and a general breakdown of signatures by province and territory will appear and remain on the website along with each e-petition.
- Supporters' and signatories' personal information collected through the petitions website will be safeguarded for a duration of six months after the e-petition becomes inactive, or until the dissolution of a Parliament, whichever is earlier, after which it will be destroyed by the House of Commons' authorized personnel.

Use of Cookies

- The House of Commons uses cookies, a feature offered by web browsers, to collect anonymous data and track the browsing habits of users who visit its website. More specifically, when a user visits the petitions website and wants to create a user account or to initiate, support, or sign an e-petition, the website automatically recognizes the domain name, IP address, web browser version, operating system, and other relevant data about the user's computer and the site the user visited that linked to our site.
- Most browsers are configured to use cookies as a default setting. Users can reconfigure their browser options to block cookies, or to receive a notification when cookies are used. However, users who have chosen to disable cookies will not have access to some features of our website.

For Further Information

Clerk of Petitions
 Room 314-C, West Block
 House of Commons
 Tel: 613-992-9511
 Fax: 613-947-7626
 Email: PMB-AED@parl.gc.ca

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Appendix A — Sample Format of an Electronic Petition

PETITION TO THE

*[A petition must be addressed to one of the following – **select one:**]*

- House of Commons
- House of Commons in Parliament assembled
- Government of Canada
- Prime Minister/Minister of *[name of ministry]*
- Member of Parliament *[name of Member of Parliament]*

WHEREAS

*[This section is optional: you may here state facts or opinions (known as grievances) supporting your request. A petition may include many grievances, but keep in mind that **it may not contain more than 250 words.**]*

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED,

[Here you may identify, in general terms, who the petitioners are. For example: “We the undersigned citizens (or residents) of Canada”; “electors of (name of electoral district)”; “residents of the Province of (name)”; “residents of the City (or Village, etc.) of (name)”.]

CALL UPON THE

*[Indicate whom you would like to take action on your request. It is usually the same addressee as above, but it may be different – **select one:**]*

- House of Commons
- House of Commons in Parliament assembled
- Government of Canada
- Prime Minister/Minister of *[name of ministry]*
- Member of Parliament *[name of Member of Parliament]*

TO

*[Set out the request by stating succinctly what **action** the petitioners wish the addressee to take or refrain from taking.]*

Paper Petitions – Guide and Terms of Use

What is a Paper Petition?

A petition is used to draw attention to an issue of public interest or concern and to request that the House of Commons, the Government of Canada, a Minister of the Crown, or a Member of the House of Commons take or refrain from some action.

Petitioners cannot directly present a petition to the House of Commons; only a Member of Parliament is able to do so. A petitioner must ask a Member if he or she accepts to present the petition in the House.

A petition must also meet certain requirements established by the rules and practices of the House. The Clerk of Petitions, a non-partisan House of Commons employee, holds the responsibility to certify that these requirements have been met.

Creating a Paper Petition – Form and Content

A [standardized template](#) exists to assist you in your drafting and to ensure that the following guidelines for the text of a petition are respected:

Addressee

A petition must be addressed to at least one of the following:

- "the House of Commons" or "the House of Commons in Parliament assembled";
- "the Government of Canada";
- a Minister of the Crown; or
- a Member of the House of Commons.

Text

The text of a petition is essentially a request, also called a "prayer", that the addressee take or avoid some concrete action to remedy a grievance. It must be clear and direct and phrased as a request, not as a demand.

A petition may include a detailed description of the grievance or a statement of opinion but these alone cannot be received as a petition.

If a petition is composed of more than one sheet of signatures and addresses, the prayer or subject matter of the petition must be indicated on every sheet.

Subject of a Petition

Federal jurisdiction

A petition must concern a subject that is within the authority of the Parliament of Canada, the House of Commons, or the Government of Canada. A petition must not concern a purely provincial or municipal matter.

Sub judice

A petition may not concern a matter that is *sub judice*, i.e., a matter that is the subject of legal proceedings or currently before the courts.

Language

A petition must be respectful, use temperate language, and not contain improper or unparliamentary language. It should not contain disrespectful or offensive language with respect to the Crown, Parliament, or the courts. It may not include charges made against the character or conduct of Parliament, the courts, or any other duly-constituted authority. A petition must be written in either English or French.

Written, Typewritten or Printed on Paper

The text of a paper petition must be written, typewritten or printed on paper no smaller than 14 cm x 21.5 cm (5.5 x 8.5 inches) and no larger than 28 cm x 43.25 cm (11 x 17 inches). A petition submitted on paper of smaller or larger size, or on any other material, is not acceptable.

Erasures or Interlineations

The text of a petition must not be altered either by erasing or crossing out words or by adding words or commentary. Any alteration will make the petition unacceptable.

Attachments, Appendices, or Extraneous Material

A petition must be free of any other matter attached or appended to, or written or printed on, the petition, e.g., additional documents, maps, pictures, logos, news articles, explanatory or supporting statements, or requests for support. A petition printed on the reverse of another document will not be accepted.

Draft Petitions

Members of the public who wish to create a petition for presentation to the House of Commons should first submit a draft of the petition (without signatures) to a Member of Parliament (MP) asking whether it is correctly worded and whether the MP will agree to present it once all signatures have been garnered.

Signatures and Addresses

A paper petition must contain a minimum of 25 valid signatures with addresses of Canadian citizens or residents. There is no minimum age requirement to sign a petition.

A petition must contain original signatures written directly on the document and not pasted, taped, photocopied, or otherwise transferred to it.

Each signatory must sign (not print) their name directly on the petition and must not sign for anyone else. If a person cannot sign their own name because of illness or a disability, this must be noted on the petition and the note signed by a witness.

Some signatures with addresses must appear on the very first sheet with the text of the petition. Signatures and addresses may appear on the reverse sides of pages. The use of any address format on a paper petition is acceptable if it clearly establishes the place where a signatory resides. Someone who does not have a fixed address must state it on the petition. Additional contact information, such as telephone numbers or email addresses, is not required.

Certification

Once a paper petition has been signed and sent to the MP who intends to present it, the MP must send it to the Clerk of Petitions to certify that it is acceptable as to form and content. A petition submitted for certification which does not meet the requirements will be returned to the MP with an explanation.

Presentation of a Paper Petition

You may ask an MP to present your petition even if the MP does not represent your electoral district. In accepting to present a petition, an MP is not necessarily agreeing with the opinions or request set out in the petition.

An MP may present a certified petition to the House on any sitting day during Routine Proceedings or at any time during a sitting of the House by filing it with a Clerk at the Table in the Chamber. In both cases, a record of the petition appears in the [Journals](#) for that day and the text of the petition, along with the total number of signatures, is published on the petitions website. The contact information of the petitioner and the signatories will not be made public.

Government Responses to Petitions

The Standing Orders (the rules governing the House of Commons) require the government to respond within 45 calendar days to every petition presented to the House of Commons. A government response to each petition will be posted on the petitions website along with the petition as soon as possible after the tabling of the response.

At prorogation (the period of time between two sessions of a Parliament), any outstanding government responses to petitions presented in the previous session must be tabled in the subsequent session. On the other hand, the dissolution of Parliament (the end of a Parliament triggering a general election) ends any requirement for the government to respond to a petition. A paper petition that was certified but not presented in one Parliament can be sent to a Member of the next Parliament for presentation when the House of Commons resumes sitting.

Terms of Use and Privacy of Personal Information

The Member of Parliament presenting a petition to the House is not necessarily supporting the content of the petition. A petition shall not be promoted by using the Member's name without his or her written consent.

The House of Commons is committed to follow best practices related to the protection of personal information collected, used, disclosed, transmitted and preserved as part of the paper petition process.

- The purpose of personal information collected on paper petitions is to ensure the integrity of the petition process. Data may be used for statistical purposes.
- The use and provision of false information is prohibited.
- The House of Commons does not assume any liability for the petitioner's or signatories' personal information on paper petitions before they are sent for certification by the Clerk of Petitions.

Once a Member of Parliament has sent a paper petition to the Clerk of Petitions for certification, the personal information of the petitioner and signatories will be subject to the following:

- Only House of Commons' authorized personnel will have access to personal information as written on the paper petition, which will not be shared or publicly disclosed.
- Once processed by the House of Commons' authorized personnel, paper petitions will be securely stored in the Private Members' Business Office for a duration of six months after they are received by that office or until dissolution of a Parliament, whichever is earlier, after which they will be destroyed by the House of Commons' authorized personnel.

For Further Information

Clerk of Petitions
Room 314-C, West Block
House of Commons
Tel: 613-992-9511
Fax: 613-947-7626
Email PMB-AED@parl.gc.ca

Last revised: September 2019

Appendix A — Sample Template of an Acceptable Petition

First page of the petition

Petition to (select: **the House of Commons, the House of Commons in Parliament assembled, the Government of Canada, name of a Minister, or name of a Member of Parliament**)

WHEREAS (Optional)

- *(Here, you may include bullet points to state briefly the reasons underlying your request by summarizing the facts which you wish the addressee to consider.)*

We, the undersigned (*Identify the petitioners in general terms, for example: citizens and residents of Canada, electors of (name of electoral district), residents of the Province of ..., residents of the City (or Village, or Township, etc.) of ...*), **call upon** (select: **the House of Commons, the House of Commons in Parliament assembled, the Government of Canada, name of a Minister, or name of a Member of Parliament**) to:

- *(Set out the prayer by stating succinctly what **action** you wish the addressee to take or refrain from taking).*

*(After the prayer, include a table with 2 columns (one for signatures and one for addresses) and several rows large enough to allow a person to sign. The table may look like this and **some signatures must be on the first page.**)*

Signatures (Canadian citizens or residents only) (Please sign your name, do not print)	Addresses
--	------------------

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |

Subsequent pages of the petition

*(Repeat the prayer from the first page at the top of each subsequent page or the subject matter of your petition. **NOTE: The text of the prayer must be the same on each page.** Add a table for signatures and addresses, as on the first page, with as many rows as can fit on the page.)*

Signatures (Canadian citizens or residents only) (Please sign your name, do not print)	Addresses
--	------------------

- | | |
|----|--|
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

[Disclaimer regarding petitions](#)